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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FIFTIETH SESSION

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

Letter dated 8 June 1995 from the representatives of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from our respective Governments and pursuant to rule 13 (e) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly of an additional item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization".

An explanatory memorandum (see annex) and a draft resolution (see appendix) in support of the above request accompany the present letter, pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

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ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was established in 1985 as a trilateral intergovernmental organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, to promote mutually beneficial regional cooperation with a view to creating conditions for sustained socio-economic growth in the member States. The basic charter of ECO is contained in the Treaty of Izmir, stipulating the following main objectives of the Organization:

(a) To expand trade among member States by providing free access to each other's markets;

(b) To promote in each member State conditions for sustained economic growth in order to achieve continuous improvement in the standard of living of the people;

(c) To consolidate cultural affinities and spiritual and fraternal ties that bind the people of the member States through social and cultural channels of thought and action;

(d) To contribute to the growth of world trade and to strive to remove iniquitous trading policies resulting in adverse terms of trade for the developing countries, by evolving a common approach in the international forums.

In November 1992, ECO admitted 7 new members and now comprises a total of 10 member countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

In accordance with article XXXV of the Treaty of Izmir, ECO has been engaged in establishing cooperative relationships with several regional and international organizations, including those within the United Nations system. As part of that process, ECO acquired observer status with the United Nations General Assembly during the forty-eighth session of the Assembly (resolution 48/2 of 13 October 1993).

Since the adoption of resolution 48/2, significant progress has been achieved in promoting cooperation between ECO and several United Nations agencies, as briefly mentioned below.

1. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Within the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two organizations, ESCAP has been participating actively in the activities of ECO, especially in the field of transport and communications. ESCAP made valuable contributions in the Almaty meeting of the ECO Transport Ministers held in October 1993, to draw up an outline plan for the development of the transport sector in the ECO region. ESCAP also sponsored a consultative meeting of the executive heads of Asia's five subregional organizations, ECO, the Association

of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the South Pacific Forum and ESCAP, held at Bangkok in February 1994. In view of the mutuality of their socio-economic goals, the five organizations decided to institutionalize the process of consultative meetings of their executive heads on an annual basis in order to identify and pursue the possibilities of inter-subregional cooperation. Accordingly, the Second Annual Consultative Meeting of the Executive Heads of Asia's Subregional Organizations and the Acting Executive Secretary of ESCAP was held at Jakarta on 27 and 28 January 1995.

ESCAP also sponsored the Seminar on the Implications of Accession to the International Conventions on Road and Rail Transport, held at Tehran in November 1994. The Expert Group Meeting on Inter-subregional Cooperation in Trade and Investment was held at Bangkok in September 1994, which provided a useful opportunity for the participants to evaluate the implications of the Uruguay Round for subregional trading arrangements.

At present, ECO and ESCAP are seeking to cooperate closely in organizing the following three activities:

(a) A round-table conference on investment promotion in the mining industry and minerals trade in the ECO countries;

(b) Preparation of a study of the economies of ECO countries in order to evolve an overall strategy to develop resources of ECO countries;

(c) Development of a project formulation framework for the development of a draft transit treaty for the ECO region.

2. United Nations Children's Organization

ECO and UNICEF have also jointly launched a mutually beneficial programme of cooperation beginning with an ECO/UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO)-sponsored meeting of the ECO Health Ministers, held at Tehran in January 1994, and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between ECO and UNICEF. Pursuant to this cooperative programme, ECO and UNICEF organized three workshops, on iodine deficiency disorders, breast-feeding and oral rehydration therapy, during the preceding year.

3. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

ECO signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation with UNIDO in January 1994. UNIDO is considering co-sponsoring with ECO a regional conference on industrial pollution control proposed to be held at Tehran in 1995.

4. United Nations Population Fund

ECO and UNFPA signed a Memorandum of Understanding for mutual cooperation in October 1994, on the occasion of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In pursuance of the joint cooperative programme, ECO and UNFPA will be organizing three regional seminars/workshops on different aspects of the promotion of population welfare in the ECO region.

5. United Nations Development Programme

ECO and UNDP signed a Memorandum of Understanding for mutual cooperation on the occasion of the Third ECO Summit Meeting, held at Islamabad in March 1995. The envisaged cooperation aims at supporting efforts of the member States of the two organizations to promote regional cooperation and sustainable human development through programmes and activities designed to mobilize and enhance human resources, to promote the environmentally sound use of natural and mineral resources and raise the living standards of the peoples in the countries concerned.

6. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAO and ECO have already established a cooperative relationship in areas of mutual interest through an exchange of letters.

7. International Drug Control Programme

In view of the special importance attached by ECO to the control of drug abuse and illegal trafficking, a comprehensive regional plan has been developed for implementation with the help of concerned international agencies and regional organizations. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed for cooperation in this field with the Programme on the occasion of the Third ECO Summit Meeting at Islamabad.

8. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ECO and UNESCO are in the process of finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding for mutual cooperation in the fields of education, science and culture.

APPENDIX

Draft resolution

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/2 of 13 October 1993, by which it granted observer status to the Economic Cooperation Organization,

Recalling also that the purposes of the United Nations are, inter alia, to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature,

Recalling further that the Charter of the United Nations provides for the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters as maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action and other activities consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Bearing in mind that the Treaty of Izmir, signed at Izmir, Turkey, on 12 March 1977, which created a permanent body for intraregional cooperation, consultation and coordination in order to enhance economic, social and cultural development,

Taking note of the communiqué of the Third Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization, held in Pakistan on 14 and 15 March 1995,

Affirming the need to strengthen the cooperation that already exists between entities of the United Nations system and the Economic Cooperation Organization in the areas of economic and social development,

Convinced of the need for the coordinated utilization of available resources to promote common objectives of the two organizations,

1. Takes note of the decision of the Heads of Government of the member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization on the desirability of strengthening cooperation and coordination between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization;

2. Invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take the necessary measures, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, to promote and expand cooperation and coordination between both Secretariats in order to increase the capacity of the two Organizations to attain their common objectives;

3. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, to promote

meetings between their representatives for consultation on policies, projects, measures and procedures that will facilitate and broaden cooperation and coordination between them;

4. Urges the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization in order to initiate, maintain and increase consultation and programmes with the Economic Cooperation Organization and its associated institutions in the attainment of their objectives;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization".